

IN THE CLAIMS

Please amend claims 1, 26, and 29 as follows:

1. (Amended) A method comprising:
selecting an elliptic curve method;
executing a point modification algorithm to manipulate points
of the elliptic curve method,
wherein the point modification algorithm includes at least

one occurrence of point fractioning;

generating a signal having a distinct characteristic using
the selected elliptic curve method;
providing substantive content; and
manipulating the substantive content using the distinct
characteristic.

26. (Amended) An apparatus comprising:

- a system for creating a distinct characteristic configured to support cryptographic manipulation of information;
- a memory device operably connected to the system for storing the distinct characteristic and executables programmed to operate on the distinct characteristic;
- an encrypting device operably connected to the system for controlling an encryption process using the distinct characteristic;
- the system further configured to execute an elliptic curve method for generating the distinct characteristic; and
- the system further configured to execute a point modification algorithm for generating the distinct characteristic, wherein the point modification algorithm includes at least

one occurrence of point fractioning.

29. (Amended) An article comprising a computer-readable memory storing operational and executable data, the operational and executable data comprising:
an encryption engine for operating on distinct characteristics configured to encrypt substantive content representing information;
the encryption engine, further comprising a distinct characteristic generation module for operating on the distinct characteristics;
the distinct characteristic generation module, further comprising an elliptic curve module for providing the distinct characteristics; and
the elliptic curve module, further comprising a point modification algorithm for calculating points related to the distinct characteristic,
wherein the point modification algorithm includes at least

one occurrence of point fractioning.
